

## Editor's Note

On July 1, John Gronbeck-Tedesco stepped down as editor, after twenty-one years fostering excellent work in the fields of dramatic theory and criticism. John has not made a habit of providing editorial comments to front each issue, a mark of his belief that the *Journal* should entertain a wide variety of views, not serve as an instrument of a particular theoretical orientation or critical approach. In several early issues of *JDTC*, though, the following “Call for Subscriptions and Papers” appeared:

“The *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* fills a long-time need for a publication which addresses the theoretical issues associated with performance and performance texts. The *Journal* will publish a variety of materials, including:

- new theories and methodologies pertinent to performance and/or dramatic literature
- a commentary about such theories or methods
- pieces of performance criticism which attempt to break new critical ground or yield new insights into theatrical works
- commentaries about criticism
- articles which explore dramatic terms as they are used in fields generally thought of as being outside the theatre
- investigations into the history of the subjects enumerated above.”

This call gives a sense of the principles that have guided the editor and associate editors of *JDTC*. While dramatic criticism, i.e., literary analysis of individual play texts, has played a role in its history, the *Journal* is better known for more wide-ranging exchanges. Its primary focus remains the development and discussion of new paradigms in the field of theatre and drama studies.

As the new editor, I am aware that journals face fresh and continuing challenges in the twenty-first century. Some say that theory, like criticism before it, has entered a “post-theory” age, when such work is considered an airing of jargon or an intellectual exercise that only distances academic work from society. The best work in theatre and drama studies, though, continues to be thoroughly informed by advances in knowledge gained by theoretical inquiry—most recently, studies in culture, race, ethnicity, and gender. That work still employs the vocabularies of rhetoric, linguistics, structuralism and semiotics, post-structuralism, new historicism, and postmodernism. It is my intent as editor to continue to welcome new ideas in theatre and dramatic theory, as well as reconsiderations of familiar ones, and efforts to mine areas of theory overlooked in the twentieth century but useful for the twenty-first.

Journals are seldom read today in the way in which we read when *JDTC* was founded in 1986. First, the groups who tend to contribute most regularly have shifted. While articles once played an important role in tenure decisions, today book publication is usually necessary to establish oneself. Essay collections have become an important venue for both emerging and established scholars. But the need for print forums in which ideas can be aired and developed remains. Journals still connect readers to breaking news in the field. It is also true, that, while at one time we may have read a complete issue when it arrived, today we often read glancingly or with an eye to our current projects, pulled away from contemplation by other commitments. Many readers “access” journals only if they are available in full-text online, an issue we plan to address for *JDTC* as well. While we move forward, though, we need to bring with us the best and most valuable aspects of scholarship. How can *JDTC* foster thoughtful contemplation in the age of multi-tasking? I invite readers’ ideas.

This issue looks both backward and forward. It is divided in the sections that have served the *Journal* well—a main section now called “Paradigms,” incorporating full-length articles, here by Anne Berkeley and Attilio Favorini; “Praxis,” in which Clark Lunberry and Philip Kolin address specific plays and their performance cues for broader consideration; and “The Field”—in this issue a special forum in which Henry Bial interviews the founding editor; and in which associate editors, former managing and section editors, and a contributor look back and assess the *Journal*’s first two decades.

I’d like to thank John Gronbeck-Tedesco for his generous, valuable service to the *Journal* and the profession. A quick look at the *Journal*’s website ([www.jdtc.ku.edu](http://www.jdtc.ku.edu)) reveals the remarkable back run of articles amassed during his tenure. Fortunately, he will continue as consulting editor. Jocelyn Buckner has become managing editor, taking over from the invaluable Joy Richmond. Please feel free to contact us at [jdtc@ku.edu](mailto:jdtc@ku.edu) with your comments as we adapt the *Journal* to the future while staying true to what it has always done best.

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